

## Vacancy update – Voters list

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We are delighted and give thanks to God that on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010, we in Alexandra were given the full support of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) through their Union Commission to seek out and Call a new Minister. We also want to say ‘thank you’ for your ongoing prayer support.

The next step is to draw up a list of qualified voters. Below you will find an extract from The Code (laws of PCI) regarding this. Please read it carefully and if there is any part that you do not understand, please speak to one of our Elders. The timetable will be:

### Week 1 – 31<sup>st</sup> October

We are required today to formally **announce the formation of the voters list** and to ensure that all present are informed of **The Code, Paragraphs 175 & 176** (below).

The Kirk Session will meet with members of the Vacancy Commission tomorrow (Monday) evening to draw up the list of voters.

### Week 2 - 7<sup>th</sup> November

**Publication of Voters List.** An announcement will be made giving the location of the list and the procedure for objections covered in Par 176 (c).

### Week 3 - 14<sup>th</sup> November

**Final Publication of Voters List.** Objections, either to a name being on the list or a name omitted from the list, must be lodged in writing with Rev. Ian McDonald by this date.

If there are any objections, Kirk Session will meet to discuss and give their decision to the member.

If there are no objections Kirk Session will certify the list and lodge a copy with the Clerk of Presbytery.

Kirk Session will then formally "invite Voting members to propose the names of possible candidates in writing through the Clerk of Kirk Session (Mervyn McCormick) or Convenor of the Vacancy Commission (Rev. Ian McDonald)". However, we encourage all of our family to give thought and prayer to this over the coming weeks.

A Congregational Meeting will also be called to discuss the next stage and to elect a Hearing Committee, the date of which will be announced once the voting list has been finalised.

**For and on behalf of the Kirk Session  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2010**

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Newtownabbey, BY36 5WP  
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## The Code - Chapter XII - Election Procedures

### Section I - Qualified Voters

**175. (1) Voting members in the Church** are communicants on the roll of the congregation who are listed, whether by name or number, as having contributed to the stipend or weekly freewill offering of the congregation in the last financial year.

(2) In addition to those so listed the following shall also be qualified, if themselves communicants on the roll –

- (a) A wife shall be qualified on a husband's contribution, and vice versa, where both are communicants. This shall also apply should the contributor himself or herself not be a communicant. If neither husband nor wife in such circumstances is a communicant, then their contribution shall qualify the eldest child, residing in the family, who is on the communicants' roll.
- (b) Should a contributor, who is not a communicant, be a member of a family residing together, then his contribution shall qualify the eldest member residing in the family who is on the communicants' roll.
- (c) Those who have been added to the communicants' roll of the congregation since the close of the last financial year, upon confirmation by the treasurer that they have contributed during the current year, shall also be qualified voters.

**176. Lists of voting members** shall be prepared and made available as follows.

(2) For the election of ruling elders –

- (a) The Kirk Session shall draw up a list of voting members, with their addresses; and this list when completed shall, as the Kirk Session may decide -
  - (i) be read to the congregation at public worship on two successive Sundays, or
  - (ii) be printed, or otherwise copied, and circulated to each member of the congregation therein named, or
  - (iii) be exhibited on two successive Sundays in such a position in the Church premises as the Kirk Session consider to provide reasonable notice of the contents of such list to the members of the congregation.
- (b)
  - (i) Notice of the intended preparation and availability of the list shall be announced to the congregation at public worship on a Sunday at least six days before the list is published;
  - (ii) At the same time the qualifications required of a voter in the Church as given in Par. 175 above and the procedure detailed below for the lodging of any objections or claims shall be announced to the congregation.
- (c) Should any member of the congregation who claims to be a voting member desire to make an objection regarding any name on the list, or omitted from the list, he shall lodge his objections, with his reasons in writing, with the Moderator of Kirk Session within a week of the first publication of the lists by any of the prescribed methods; and the Kirk Session shall give its decision thereon or refer the matter for decision by Presbytery.
- (d) Should any member objecting be dissatisfied with the decision of the Kirk Session with respect to his own or another's qualifications he shall have the right of appeal to Presbytery within seven days. The same right belongs in such cases to any member of the Kirk Session, including any assessors that may have been appointed by Presbytery.
- (e) When the voters' list has been finalised by the Kirk Session without appeal or reference, or by the Presbytery after appeal or reference, it shall be dated, signed and certified as correct by the presiding Moderator, who shall forthwith have it lodged with the Clerk of Presbytery, with a certified copy being retained by the Moderator or interim Moderator of Kirk Session as the case may be. This procedure must be completed before proceeding to the election.

(3) **For the election of a minister**, the same general procedure shall be followed as for the election of ruling elders, with the following additional provisions –

- (a) The list shall be drawn up by the Kirk Session under the supervision of the interim Moderator, assisted by one or more assessors appointed by Presbytery.
- (b) A certified voters' list, after having been lodged with the Clerk of Presbytery, shall not be altered during the vacancy in a pastorate unless the vacancy extend beyond twelve months, in which case the Presbytery shall have a new list prepared in accordance with the preceding rules.
- (c) Notwithstanding the foregoing provision, should a widower or widow in a family die in the interval between the making out of a voters' list and the day of voting, the eldest child, being resident in the family and on the communicants' roll of the congregation, shall be entitled to exercise the deceased's vote, unless he is already himself a qualified voter.